MASSACHUSETTS WETLANDS RESTORATION NEWS

The Newsletter of the Partnership to Restore Massachusetts Wetlands

Wetlands Restoration & Banking Program **Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs**
Volume 4, Number 1 **Spring 1998**

Restoration Conference To Be Held Saturday, May 30, 1998

The 1998 Annual Conference of the Partnership To Restore Massachusetts Wetlands will be held at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center in Worcester from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM on Saturday, May 30, 1998. Pre-registration is requested. Display space is available. Please see agenda and registration information on Page 4.

Wetlands Restoration Planning *Lessons From the Neponset*

The Wetlands Restoration & Banking Program (WRBP) is implementing a watershed-based approach, using wetlands mapping, technical analysis, and community planning to identify and prioritize potential wetland restoration sites. In September 1997, WRBP circulated a *Preliminary Report* identifying potential wetland restoration sites that could improve water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and needed flood storage within the Neponset River watershed. This is the first application of WRBP's watershed wetlands restoration planning approach. Extensive discussion with watershed stakeholders, especially stream teams and conservation commissions, has provided important insights, including:

1) Advocates are very interested in protecting the river and its wetlands. However, the concept of wetlands restoration at the watershed level is new. One or two successful demonstration projects would give others the confidence to undertake restoration projects.

2) The best opportunities for demonstration projects appear to be on public lands. In the Neponset, WRBP and the MDC are cooperating on salt marsh restoration at several sites in Quincy and Boston and are exploring freshwater wetland sites further upstream.

3) There is a healthy dose of skepticism that government initiated projects can succeed. Once these concerns have been expressed, however, local people are willing to become involved.

4) While there is a growing awareness of the importance of nurturing the watershed, when it comes to direct action, most people want to deal first with what is in their own backyard, and watershed-level goals become secondary to local interests. Wetland restoration project suggestions from the community were those sites with which involved participants were most familiar.

5) Conservation commissions, in particular, are interested in advancing wetland restoration projects, although the line between restoring wetlands proactively and effective enforcement of the Wetlands Protection Act often is blurred.

6) Response from the private sector was weak. Outreach to the business community needs to be improved.

[Continued on Page 2.]

Restoration Award Nominees Sought

Do you know an individual or organization that has made an outstanding contribution to wetlands restoration efforts in the Commonwealth? You can make sure they receive proper recognition. The Partnership to Restore Massachusetts

Wetlands seeks nominations for the 1998 Wetlands Restoration Awards to be presented at the upcoming Partnership Meeting. See Page 5 for information.

7) A strong river advocacy group, such as the Neponset River Watershed Association, is a key element in a successful watershed-wide wetlands restoration initiative. Such a group can command the attention of a broad audience and help maintain a community focus on the importance of site-by-site restoration for the benefit of the watershed as a whole.

WRBP will be circulating a *Draft Neponset River Watershed Wetlands Restoration Plan* this spring for further community input. The *Draft WWRP* will provide prioritized lists of potential restoration sites that can address each of the seven watershed wetlands restoration goals identified by the watershed community. Those wishing to be added to the mailing list to receive this document may call WRBP at (617) 727-9800 x213.

WRBP expects to refine the watershed wetlands restoration evaluation and planning process as it proceeds with WWRPs in the Shawsheen, Otter, Paskamanset, Upper Ipswich, Upper Blackstone, and other watersheds. Clearly, there are more lessons to be learned as we plan for and implement a significant statewide wetlands restoration program.

Upcoming Funding Opportunity: *Section 319 Nonpoint Source Grants*

Section 319 (s. 319) of the Clean Water Act of 1987 was established as a national program to control nonpoint sources (NPS) of pollution. Each year, the Department of Environmental Protection (the Department), Division of Municipal Services, issues a Request for Responses (RFR) for competitive projects to be funded under s. 319. The RFR for federal fiscal year 1999 (FFY'99), October 1, 1998, through September 30, 1999, was released on Friday, March 13, 1998. Proposals are due on Friday, May 1, 1998.

In order to be considered eligible for funding, projects must: implement measures that address the prevention, control, and abatement of NPS pollution; target the major source(s) of NPS within a subwatershed; have a 40% non-federal match of the total project cost; contain an appropriate method for evaluating the project results; address activities that are identified in the Massachusetts NPS Management Program Plan; include an outreach

component; and comply with Affirmative Action and Minority/Woman Business Enterprise Requirements. Eligible projects are rated and selected for funding by an internal screening committee. Preference may be given to projects that complement the Department's ongoing or scheduled basinwide activities, and, for FFY'99 address NPS pollution in the Hudson (Hoosic, Kinderhook and Bashbish), Housatonic, Charles, North Coastal, and Ten Mile River watersheds. A list of recommended projects will be submitted to EPA with the Department's federal grant application in August. Once the grant application is approved, the Department begins contract negotiations with the proponents of the funded projects.

Types of eligible s.319 projects include: comprehensive subwatershed projects that address all major identified nonpoint sources affecting water quality in a subwatershed; demonstration projects that accelerate the transfer and adoption of new or innovative BMPs, technologies, or institutional approaches; groundwater projects that target high priority statewide NPS groundwater problems; inlake projects which address the control of NPS pollution from lake watersheds; and ***watershed resource restoration projects that restore vegetated wetlands, lakes, rivers, streams, coastal zones and estuaries, shorelines, riparian areas, seagrass beds, and other aquatic habitats***.

Prospective applicants are encouraged to submit proposals for projects that complement the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs' Wetlands Restoration and Banking Program. Applicants also are encouraged to propose projects which support the Department's Title 5 Program, including, but not limited to, projects addressing lakeside community septic systems through either demonstration of innovative alternative systems or subwatershed restoration projects. The Department also encourages applications which address the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs' "Stormwater Challenge" for the Charles River through implementation projects designed to identify and mitigate stormwater pollution. Although the Stormwater Challenge is specific to the Charles River, the 319 Program would welcome stormwater mitigation proposals in any river basin.

To obtain additional program information, please call Beth McCann at (617) 292-5901, or write to the Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Municipal Services,

One Winter Street, 5th floor, Boston, MA 02108, ATTN: Beth McCann.

Beth McCann
DEP 319 Grant Coordinator

Salt Marsh Restoration and Coastal Wetland Restriction Orders

The Coastal and Inland Wetland Restriction Acts (MGL C.130, s.105 and MGL C.131, s.40A.), enacted by the Massachusetts Legislature in the mid-1960s, are intended to provide a more proactive approach to protecting wetlands than site-by-site permitting. The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and its predecessors (Department of Natural Resources and Department of Environmental Management) have mapped wetlands and have recorded protective orders at the appropriate Registries of Deeds limiting future activities that would alter wetlands. About 50% of Massachusetts coastal wetlands have such orders which insure a high level of protection for these critical resources.

Recently, several salt marsh restoration projects initiated in cooperation with WRBP have entered the permitting process. It has been discovered, ironically, that coastal wetland restriction orders recorded for these properties prohibit the very activity proposed to restore them, namely, restoring tidal flow. Salt marsh restoration is a priority for the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs; but such activities were not contemplated several decades ago when the orders were written.

DEP and WRBP are cooperating to take immediate action, initially at up to four sites: Sagamore Marsh in Sandwich and Bourne (sponsored by EOEA and the Army Corps), Barlows Landing in Bourne (sponsored by the Town of Borne DPW), Argilla Road in Ipswich (sponsored by the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Town of Ipswich), and Joppa Flats in Newburyport. (sponsored by the Massachusetts Audubon Society). At these sites, DEP will propose the adoption of new restriction orders identifying wetland restoration as a permitted activity on properties where such work will occur. The new orders will go through a full public review process as required under the Coastal Wetlands Restriction Regulations (302 CMR 4.00). This process should take about two months.

WRBP will work with future restoration project sponsors to identify existing wetland restriction orders, as well as other regulatory requirements, early in project development. Everyone shares the twin goals of supporting wetland restoration projects and maintaining the integrity of existing wetland restriction orders.

More Restoration Project Sponsors Join GROWetlands Initiative

Under the "Resolution To Restore Massachusetts Wetlands", state and federal agencies work cooperatively to restore wetlands through the Coastal America Partnership. The involvement of the federal partners is triggered by the execution of an Agreement under WRBP's GROWetlands Initiative. For GROWetlands projects, WRBP coordinates with federal agencies, including the US Fish & Wildlife Service, Army Corps of Engineers, Environmental Protection Agency, and Natural Resources Conservation Service, to provide technical, funding, and other support.

Currently, there are nine projects with signed GROWetlands Agreements and eight additional projects with Agreements pending. Recent additions to the GROWetlands Initiative include:

* Joppa Flats Salt Marsh Restoration Project in Newburyport sponsored by the Massachusetts Audubon Society;
* Neponset Marshes Salt Marsh Restoration Project in Boston sponsored by the Metropolitan District Commission; and
* Marsh Road Restoration Project in Kingston sponsored by the Jones River Watershed Association and the Kingston Conservation Commission.

To receive more information about the GROWetlands Initiative, and an application form, contact WRBP at (617) 727-9800 x213.

The Partnership To Restore Massachusetts Wetlands
and
The Massachusetts Wetlands Restoration & Banking Program
Invite You To Attend

1998 Massachusetts Wetlands Restoration Conference

Saturday, May 30, 1998 - 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM
University of Massachusetts Medical Center - Worcester

AGENDA

8:00 - 9:00	**Registration, Displays, Networking**
9:00 - 10:30	**Welcome** - Christy Foote-Smith, WRBP
	Keynote Address - John Teal (invited)
	Progress Report - Christy Foote-Smith, Wetlands Restoration & Banking Program
	Award Presentations - Bill Hubbard, US Army Corps; Christy Foote-Smith, WRBP
10:30 - 11:00	**Break**
11:00 - 12:00	**Session I** - *Case Studies in Wetlands Restoration*
	Argilla Road, Ipswich - Eric Hutchins, National Marine Fisheries Service
	Goldthwaite Reservation, Marblehead - Walter Montgomery, Northeast Mosquito Control
	Neponset Marshes, Boston - Rich Kleiman, EOEA Watershed Team Leader
12:00 - 1:30	**Lunch, Meet the Experts, Networking**
1:30 - 2:45	**Session II** - *Wetlands Restoration Planning in Watersheds and Coastal Areas*
	Introduction - Christy Foote-Smith, WRBP
	Neponset River Watershed - Chuck Katuska, WRBP
	Rumney Marsh ACEC - Liz Sorenson, ACEC Program
	8 Towns & The Bay - Tim Purinton, Parker River Clean Water Association
	Identifying Potential Wetlands Restoration Sites through Aerial Photointerpretation - Ralph Tiner, US Fish & Wildlife Service (invited)
2:45 - 3:00	**Break**
3:00 - 4:00	**Session III** - *Wetland Restoration Techniques*
	Wetlands Restoration Overview - Chuck Katuska, WRBP
	Salt Marsh Restoration - Ed Reiner, Environmental Protection Agency
	Role of Conservation Commissions - MACC Board Member (to be announced)
	Key Elements of a Successful Project - Christy Foote-Smith, WRBP

Registration is free*. To help us make sure there are conference packets for all who attend,* ***please pre-register*** *using the form below.* ***Display space*** *is available at no cost. Call (617) 292-5991 to reserve. For* ***directions*** *to the conference, see Page 7.*

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1998 Massachusetts Wetlands Restoration Conference Registration

Name _____ **Affiliation** _____ **Phone** _____

Address _____ **City** _____ **State** _____ **ZIP** _____

Please return this form to: Wetlands Restoration & Banking Program/EOEA, 100 Cambridge St. - 20th Floor, Boston, MA 02202.

RESTORATION AWARDS

REQUEST FOR AWARD NOMINATIONS

The ***Partnership to Restore Massachusetts Wetlands*** and the ***Massachusetts Wetlands Restoration & Banking Program*** announce the ***1998 Massachusetts Wetlands Restoration Awards***. The purpose of the awards is to recognize outstanding contributions to the restoration of Massachusetts wetlands and to encourage others by example. Although wetlands restoration is a relatively new approach to wetlands protection in Massachusetts, there are already many who have made significant contributions. Please help identify the most worthy for public recognition!

Award Criteria: Awards will be made to individuals and organizations that have made outstanding contributions to wetlands restoration in Massachusetts. An "outstanding contribution" means that the activity is exemplary or innovative and can serve as an inspiration or model for others. A potential award winner will have accomplished one or more of the following:

- Played a key role in the completion of one or more successful wetland restoration projects that are innovative or unique in terms of size, location, restoration technique, type of habitat, or other characteristic.
- Exemplified the partnership approach to wetlands restoration.
- Made a unique contribution to the science of wetlands restoration.
- Significantly improved public understanding of and support for wetlands restoration through teaching, publications, demonstration project, or other means.
- Conducted a study of one or more restoration sites that has improved our knowledge and understanding of wetlands restoration projects and opportunities.
- Played a leadership role in developing, promoting, or implementing wetlands restoration efforts in the Commonwealth.
- Engaged in any other activity that substantially supports the wetlands restoration Action Plan of the Partnership and its implementation.

For guidance on the types of projects that qualify as "wetlands restoration", contact WRBP.

Nominations must be received no later than Friday, May 1, 1998. Please use the nomination form on Page 6. Award certificates will be presented at the 1998 Wetlands Restoration Conference on Saturday, May 30, 1998, at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center in Worcester.

Partnership To Restore Massachusetts Wetlands

MASSACHUSETTS WETLANDS RESTORATION AWARDS
AWARD NOMINATION FORM

Nominator Information

Name: _____ Title: _____

Organization: _____

Street Address: _____ City/Town: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____ Relationship to Nominee:

_____

Nominee Information

Name: _____ Title: _____

Organization:

_____

Street Address: _____ City/Town: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____

Basis For Nomination

In one or two sentences, based on the Award Criteria, summarize the nominee's unique contribution to wetlands restoration in Massachusetts.

On a separate sheet, describe in detail how the nominee meets the criteria for this award. *[The Awards Committee reserves the right to request additional information.]*

Attach any documents that support your nomination.

Attach any letters from others that you wish to support your nomination.

Nominations must be **mailed** (no faxes, please) to:

Awards Committee
Wetlands Restoration & Banking Program
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street - 20th Floor
Boston, Massachusetts 02202

Nominations with all supporting documentation must be <u>received</u> by May 1, 1998.

Directions to 1998 Massachusetts Wetlands Restoration Conference

University of Massachusetts MEDICAL CENTER

Area Map

UMass is located just north of Route 9, on the west side of Lake Quinsigamond, between Plantation Street and Lake Avenue North. The campus is easily accessible from major highways.

From the Mass Pike:

At Exit 10, take I-290 east to exit 21, turn right at end of ramp and follow Plantation Street south.

At Exit 11, turn left onto Route 122, right onto Sunderland Road, left onto Lake Avenue.

From I-190:

At Shrewsbury exit (watch for exit ramp on left), take I-290 east to exit 21, turn right at end of ramp and follow Plantation Street south.

From I-290:

At Exit 21, turn right at end of ramp and follow Plantation Street south.

At Exit 22, turn right at end of ramp, at first traffic light turn left onto Plantation Street and proceed south.

Park in **Parking Garage**. Use **School entrance**. Proceed to **Faculty Conference Room** on first floor.

Campus Map

National Marine Fisheries Service Initiates Partnership to Restore Argilla Road Salt Marsh

A partnership organized by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Northeast Regional Office in Gloucester has nearly completed funding, permitting, and design plans to restore approximately 15 acres of tidally restricted salt marsh in Ipswich. Construction of Argilla Road, completed over one hundred years ago, effectively cut off this large segment of salt marsh from normal tidal flushing. Recent maintenance work completed in the early-1980s enlarged the tidal connection to a mere 32-inch diameter culvert. The resultant tidal range on the restricted side of the road is less than 2 feet while on the unrestricted side it reaches well over 8 feet. *Phragmites australis* expansion is occurring at many locations in the restricted marsh and excessive mosquito breeding has been documented in the high marsh pannes that are only flooded under storm conditions when waves and tidal surge can overtop the roadway.

The current plan is to replace the existing 32-inch culvert with a 5-foot high by 8-foot wide concrete box culvert. The mean high water level is expected to rise vertically by well over 12 inches and horizontally it will inundate a few acres of *Phragmites* daily. Completion of the project will significantly increase available habitat for both estuarine plant and animal species. Other important benefits include an opportunity to educate the public about NMFS's involvement in restoration and offer techniques and protocols to local communities wishing to sponsor their own salt marsh restoration projects.

The project is being conducted by a broad partnership of government and nonprofit agencies with a specific focus on community participation. Most of the direct project costs and management staff are being funded by a grant from the NMFS Restoration Center and the Fish America Foundation. The project also is receiving critical inkind support from the Town of Ipswich, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, The Trustees of Reservations, WRBP, and Massachusetts Audubon Society.

Efforts are currently underway to develop an interagency agreement between NMFS and WBRP to include this project under the GROWetlands Initiative. Special emphasis and credit for making this project possible should be directed to Armand Michaud, Director of the Ipswich Department of Public Works. Armand has made himself, his staff, and equipment available to ensure that the project will be completed in a timely and efficient manner. Though this particular project may receive the most public attention, the Ipswich Public Works Department is proud to be involved with several other projects targeted at improving coastal marshes in town.

An ecological assessment of the marsh system is being conducted to characterize the marsh and to provide baseline information. Future studies will be compared to the baseline to determine the effects of restoration of tidal flushing on vegetation as well as the size, distribution, and abundance of macroinvertebrates and fish. Volunteers are participating in the sampling events.

The project is currently proceeding through the permitting process. As noted in a separate article, a new coastal wetland restriction order specifically identifying restoration as a permitted activity will be proposed for this property.

For more information pertaining to this project, or if you would like to tour the restoration site, please contact Eric Hutchins (978) 281-9313, or John Catena (978) 281-9251.

Eric Hutchins
National Marine Fisheries Service

Katuska Joins WRBP

In July 1997, Chuck Katuska became WRBP's Wetland Scientist, bringing 14 years of experience as a professional wetland scientist in both the public and private sectors to his work at WRBP. A graduate of Yale College and Yale School of Forestry and

Environmental Studies, Chuck also has served on two Conservation Commissions and is currently a member of the MACC Board of Directors.

NEW FROM WRBP!!
Wetlands Kit for K-12 Educators

WRBP developed this "idea kit" to encourage K-12 teachers to bring the wonderful world of wetlands to their classrooms and to bring their students to the wonderful outdoor classrooms that wetlands can provide.
Conservation commissions are encouraged to present the Kit to their local schools. To request a copy call WRBP at (617) 727-9800 x213.

Gore Congratulates Team

In a letter dated August 12,1997, Vice President Al Gore congratulated the Coastal America Northeast Regional Implementation Team (NERIT) members, including Christy Foote-Smith, the Director of the Massachusetts Wetlands Restoration & Banking Program. The outstanding partnering efforts among federal and state/tribal agencies, such as those conducted under the Massachusetts Wetlands Restoration and Banking Program, are the types of government reinventions that this Administration wants to encourage. The 1997 Coastal America Partnership Award was given to the NERIT at a ceremony hosted by the Navy at the New London Sub Base in Groton, Connecticut. Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy William Cassidy presented the award and the Vice President's letter to the team on behalf of the White House.

Vice President Gore wrote the following to Christy and her fellow team members:

Please accept my congratulations on receiving Coastal America's 1997 Partnership Award. The award recognizes outstanding team efforts demonstrating the collaborative nature of the Coastal America Partnership.

Coastal America continues to bring together federal agencies, as well as state and local governments and other organizations, to develop projects that protect, preserve and restore coastal ecosystems. By applying different federal authorities and programs synergistically to natural resource and infrastructure issues, you are solving problems that would be intractable for one agency alone. This approach exemplifies the goals of this

Administration to reinvent government and better address the real needs of the country.

As an award winner, you represent the good that is accomplished by our government when we bring all our resources to the aid of a common goal. Thank you for your leadership and personal commitment.

Please accept my best wishes and hopes for your continued success.

Sincerely,
Al Gore

An example of the innovative activities of WRBP is the collaboration of the program and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and Construction solving issues of tidal flows into coastal salt marshes. This is one of the "natural resource and infrastructure issues" being solved by the partnership and it is recognized nationally as the type of collaboration that is necessary to make tangible improvements to the ecological productivity of our natural systems.

Bill Hubbard
NERIT Coordinator
Army Corps of Engineer

Massachusetts Wetlands Restoration News is published by the Wetlands Restoration & Banking Program for the Partnership To Restore Massachusetts Wetlands. The principal writer and editor is Christy Foote-Smith, WRBP Director and Partnership Coordinator.

Credits: Masthead logo is by Mara Biasi. Graphics on pages 2 and 3 are anonymous. Graphic on page 8 is by Thomas Ford, Courtesy of Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council, Michigan. Graphic on page 10 is by Jenny Shoemaker.

***Partnership to Restore Massachusetts Wetlands Coordinating Committee*:**
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs
Executive Office of Transportation & Construction
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
National Marine Fisheries Service
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions
Massachusetts Audubon Society

Wetlands Restoration Lessons From East Anglia

Last fall, in the interest of learning from recent innovations and developments in wetland preservation, restoration, and reconstruction, WRBP staff participated in a 3-day tour of project sites in East Anglia, England. The projects represented a cross-section of public and private wetland restoration initiatives and showcased a sweeping range of ideas and accomplishments. Project managers and ecologists available at each site provided detailed site information to the visitors.

Beginning on Sunday morning, November 2, 1997, participants toured the Kingfisher Bridge Project located just south of the cathedral city of Ely. There a local farmer has taken approximately 150 acres of economically marginal farmland out of production and, through a major reconstruction effort, is creating an extensive complex of open water areas, emergent marshes, and wet meadows. Detailed and delicate earthworks were planned and directed in the field by a supervising ecologist to make the best use of water from the River Cam as the primary source of hydrologic support for the restored wetlands. Common sandpipers in abundance and the occasional spotted redshank were feeding in loose groups on the exposed mudflats and shallow water habitats. In addition to the extensive and diverse wetland habitats restored, a newly exposed chalk cliff face was drilled to create nesting cavities for bank swallows. The Kingfisher Bridge Project is entirely funded by private means and, through the reallocation of government agricultural production rights from this marginal site to better lands, was accomplished without loss of farmland production.

That afternoon, we visited Wicken Fen, England's oldest wildlife and habitat preserve. Operated by The National Trust, half the site preserves the most extensive remaining natural fenland (freshwater wetlands dominated by extensive *Phragmites* reedbeds) in England. Due to the massive amount of soil drainage required to create and maintain the neighboring farmland, Wicken can only be preserved artificially through major pumping of water. On its remaining land, the National Trust staff has begun a huge fenland reconstruction project, emphasizing the regrowth of *Phragmites* reedbeds which, in England, are highly valued as a source of roof thatch and species-specific wildlife habitats. The restoration of *Phragmites* and opposing control strategies for *Phragmites* provided a steady topic of conversation throughout the entire trip.

Day 2 of the trip began with a brief visit to the Lackford Wildlife Reserve, a 40-acre site reclaimed from worked-out gravel pits. Comprised of a series of shallow ponds with shrub-dominated bordering vegetated wetlands, the reserve also incorporates a network of trails linking several "hides" or shelters from which observers compile an increasing list of breeding and non-resident bird species using these early successional habitats. During our whirlwind visit, we were privileged to overlook hundreds of wintering gadwall and goldeneye on the ponds. The Lackford Wildlife Reserve is an ongoing cooperative effort between the Suffolk Wildlife Trust and the existing gravel removal operation. When complete, the wetland creation and enhancements activities will ultimately triple the size of the reserve after the gravel removal company completes its operations. The technique of stabilizing worked-out gravel pits as valuable wetland habitats should have a bright future in Massachusetts, especially in more densely developed areas where existing pits are nearing closure.

From Lackford, we traveled east to Redgrave and Lopham Fen. This 300-acre National Nature Reserve is the largest remaining tract of valley fen and is situated at the headwaters of the Waveny River. However, due to heavy water extraction, the formerly herbaceous fens have been seriously degraded by invasive shrub and tree species. Although seasonal weather conditions prevented us from finding the great raft spider, a global rarity occurring at only two sites in England, we were treated to the antics of siskins and redpolls as they foraged for alder catkins along the fenland fringes. With funds from the European Union, the Suffolk Wildlife Trust has been collaborating with the National Rivers Authority and the Essex and Suffolk Water Company over the last several years to restore the site. Relocation of a major public water supply well was a key factor in facilitating the restoration project. As

construction of a raised boardwalk and modern visitor's center progressed, it became evident that public and private cooperation is vital to ecological restoration efforts at a meaningful, landscape scale.
[Continued on Page 11.]

Day 2 also took us to Minsmere, a 2,000-acre, 50-year-old restored site owned and managed by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. Separated from the English Channel by dunes and shingle beach, its brackish ponds and extensive reedbeds support a wide variety of waterfowl and shorebirds, including European bitterns and the Kingdom's second largest colony of avocets. During our visit, several large flocks of gadwall and teal were sheltering from the bitter winds on protected open water areas while marsh harriers hunted fitfully over the managed reedbeds. The acceptability and value of restored wetland habitats to important wildlife resources were nowhere more clearly demonstrated than at Minsmere.

Day 3 found us at Trimley Marshes, a 200-acre wetland restoration site built by the Suffolk Wildlife Trust on the Orwell estuary. Also sheltering hundreds of widgeon and scores of brent geese, this two-year-old complex of open water basins and freshwater marshes was reclaimed from abandoned farmland. Funded by the Felixstowe Dock and Railway Company as mitigation for the expansion of the adjacent container shipping port, Trimley Marshes exemplifies the ecological value of a successful wetland restoration as project mitigation.

The East Anglia trip provided us with valuable exposure to successful wetland restoration projects, each with a wealth of important lessons. In addition to exploring the technical aspects of restoring wetland hydrology and vegetation under a variety of conditions, we saw each project as living, dynamic proof that a wide range of wetland restoration initiatives can succeed. These environmental restoration projects variously took shape as a result of pro-active public policy, regulatory requirements for environmental mitigation, public-private cooperation, or wholly private interests, both individual and organizational. With such a wide range of interests and facilitators, it is no wonder that successful wetland restoration projects have been achieved at a significant landscape scale. Seeing first-hand, not only the water quality benefits and wildlife use of restored wetlands, but also the use by and value to the public which these restored habitats now represent, our commitment to the restoration of Massachusetts' wetlands was redoubled.

The trip was thoughtfully organized by a member of the Massachusetts Audubon Society's Board of Directors. WRBP participation was, in part, generously underwritten by the Oak Knoll Foundation.

JOIN THE MOVEMENT - BE A RESTORATION PARTNER

The Coordinating Committee of the Partnership To Restore Massachusetts Wetlands invites anyone with an interest in wetlands restoration to join the Partnership which is now over 200 strong.

PARTNERSHIP FORM

Name _____ Title _____ Affiliation _____

Address (Street/City/State/ZIP) _____ Phone ( )_____

I/we support the "Resolution to Restore Massachusetts Wetlands". Please include my (check one): __agency __organization __self as a Partner in the Partnership to Restore Massachusetts Wetlands and put me on the mailing list to receive **Massachusetts Wetlands Restoration News**. I understand that this does not involve a commitment to a specific action or financial contribution. I/we will make implementation of the Partnership's Action Plan a priority and will do everything within our power to restore Massachusetts wetlands.

___Please send a copy of the Partnership's **Action Plan**.

Please return this form to:

Wetlands Restoration & Banking Program
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street - 20th Floor
Boston, MA 02202
PHONE: 617-727-9800 x213

FAX: 617-727-2754

Wetlands Restoration & Banking Program
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Boston, Massachusetts 02202
(617) 727-9800 x213

Massachusetts Wetlands Restoration News

The Newsletter of the Partnership To Restore Massachusetts Wetlands

"Restoring Our Wetlands: Healing Our Watersheds"

A new video production from the
Massachusetts Wetlands Restoration & Banking Program

Available at your local public library
through the generosity of Sweet Water Trust